

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CHALLENGES TO THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY  
ALLIANCE IN THE POST-POST COLD WAR ERA

by

Colonel Mitsuru Nodomi  
Japan Ground Self-Defense Force  
Field Artillery

Colonel (Retired) Don Boose  
Project Advisor

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## ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: COL Mitsuru Nodomi

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The Japan-U.S. security alliance experienced the Cold War and post Cold War during the twentieth century, and is now facing a post-post Cold War environment triggered by the September 11 terrorist attacks at the outset of the twenty first century. The security circumstances surrounding both countries are rapidly changing as a result of their deepening interdependency, spreading terrorism, and new potential threats. Given this situation, the most essential questions are how to define the alliance and how it will function in the security circumstances. This paper, after reviewing the characteristics and evolution of the Japan-U.S. security alliance to date, explores the definition and functions of an alliance using two popular theories of international relations, examines how each theory fits or does not fit this particular alliance, and then makes clear what we can learn from each theory to strengthen the alliance in the coming era. It concludes by recommending a standing framework for continuous strategic consultations between the two countries as well as with third countries, with a wider capability, including economic and other aspects, in order to make the alliance more comprehensive and better orchestrated.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
CHALLENGES TO THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE IN THE POST-POST COLD WAR ERA .....	1
<b>CHARACTERISTICS AND EVOLUTION OF THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE TO DATE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ALLIANCES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
THE REALISTS' VIEWS ON ALLIANCES .....	4
THE IDEALISTS' VIEWS ON ALLIANCES .....	4
<b>THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE AND THE THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
THE ALLIANCE DURING THE COLD WAR .....	5
THE ALLIANCE AFTER THE COLD WAR .....	6
<b>Realist Views on the Alliance after the Cold War .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Idealist Views on the Alliance after the Cold War .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CHALLENGES IN THE POST-POST COLD WAR ERA .....</b>	<b>10</b>
REALISTS' ADVICE .....	11
IDEALISTS' ADVICE.....	12
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
ENDNOTES .....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	19



## CHALLENGES TO THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE IN THE POST-POST COLD WAR ERA

The Japan-U.S. security alliance experienced the Cold War and post Cold War during the twentieth century, and is now facing a post-post Cold War environment triggered by the September 11 terrorist attacks at the outset of the twenty first century. The security circumstances surrounding both countries are rapidly changing as a result of their deepening interdependency, spreading terrorism, and new potential threats. In order to meet the new security requirements, each country is making its own adjustments. The United States is now revising its global military posture, including its forward deployment in the Far East, as well as further accelerating transformation of its armed forces. Last December, the Japanese government authorized the National Defense Program Guideline, which defines the roles and missions played by Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and articulates Japan's future defense build-up for Japan's Fiscal Year (JFY) 2005 and after. On the other hand, in order to maintain the alliance, collaborative efforts are also indispensable. Given these situations, both governments have discussed the future of the alliance since the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) in December 2002 and the SCC in February 2005 announced the common strategic objectives for the first time. However, the document is rather a comprehensive list of issues and does not provide an answer to the essential questions about the alliance. These are how to define the alliance and, based on that definition, how it will function in a post-post Cold War environment. This paper, after reviewing the characteristics and evolution of the Japan-U.S. security alliance to date, explores the definition and functions of an alliance using two popular theories of international relations, examines how each theory fits or does not fit this particular alliance, and then makes clear what we can learn from each theory to strengthen the alliance in the coming era.

### **CHARACTERISTICS AND EVOLUTION OF THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE TO DATE**

On 8 September 1951, the day Japan recovered its sovereignty after signing the Treaty of Peace, Japan and the United States concluded the "Treaty of Security Between Japan and the United States of America." Although this Treaty is a basis of the current bilateral security alliance, the objectives, authority, and responsibility of both countries were then far different from the current framework. Under the Treaty, the United States was not obligated to defend Japan but the U.S. forces stationed in Japan would "be utilized to contribute ... to the security of Japan against Armed Attack." The Treaty also articulated that the United States could use its forces to put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan upon request from the



Japanese government. Meanwhile, as Japan regained its own power, including its foundation of the Japan Self-Defense Force, and the confrontation between the West and East deepened, the voices to revise the Treaty became louder, especially from the Japanese side.

In 1960, the current treaty, the "Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America," was signed. As the words, "Mutual Cooperation" added to the title show, the revised Treaty enlarged its scope and strengthened bilateral responsibility. Article II articulates the economic cooperation between the two countries and refers to the significance of freedom and democratic values, thus providing a much broader and friendlier relationship for both countries.<sup>1</sup> Security issues are specified in Article V and VI. Article V obligates the United States to defend Japan when Japan is under an armed attack from a third country,<sup>2</sup> while Article VI grants the United States permission to use "Facilities and Areas" in Japan in order to contribute to the security of Japan, as well as , to peace and stability in the Far East.<sup>3</sup>

Since Japan can not exercise the right of collective self-defense under the current official interpretation of the Constitution, the Treaty does not obligate Japan to take any actions in the event of an armed attack against the United States.<sup>4</sup> This results in the criticism that the Treaty is not reciprocal. Actually, some critics argue that the Japanese government used the Treaty as an excuse to restrain its defense build-up. However, the authority and responsibility of both countries under Article V and VI should be considered to be complementary.<sup>5</sup> In addition, in the United States , there have been claims that the Japan-U.S. security arrangements work as "a cork/cap on the bottle," especially in early days , keeping Japan from once again developing an aggressive military. The idea implies that it is not wise for the United States to encourage Japan to build forces exceeding the minimum necessary for self defense.

As the Soviet Union increased its military capabilities in the Far East, especially after the late 1960s, the bilateral security cooperation became much more important for both countries. With this strategic imperative, consultations and cooperation through diplomatic channels led both governments to agree to initiate discussions on actual military cooperation under Article V and VI. In 1978, the "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation" (1978 Guidelines), clarifying roles and missions played by the respective forces, was issued. The 1978 Guidelines made cooperation under Article V clear: an armed attack against Japan would result in the United States undertaking offensive operations while Japan would conduct defensive operations and secure its sea lines of communication. Meanwhile, operational cooperation under Article VI was left for future study, because the most urgent threat shared by the two governments was an

all-out war initiated by the Soviet Union, which was presumed to include a large scale armed attack against Japan.<sup>6</sup>

The end of the Cold War brought drastic changes to the international security circumstances. Since it appeared that we were entering a new age of interdependence and an end to a bipolar world, the geographical areas for mutual security interests and the room for cooperation dramatically expanded. With the collapse of the bipolar system, many conflicts and disputes that had been contained during the Cold War surfaced. In Northeast Asia, a series of brinkmanship acts by North Korea and rising tension over the Taiwan Strait attracted international attention. Given these strategic circumstances, both countries recognized the necessity to revise the bilateral security alliance.

In April 1996, Japan and the United States issued the "Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security" (Joint Declaration), and successfully redefined the alliance for the post Cold War. In this Declaration, both governments reached a consensus to expand the scope of bilateral cooperation, creating the so-called second and third baskets, which referred to cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and global spheres.<sup>7</sup> In addition, both governments agreed to review the 1978 Guidelines and new Guidelines were issued in 1997 (1997 Guidelines). The 1997 Guidelines articulated "Cooperation under Normal Circumstances" for the first time and worked out detailed cooperation under Article VI, which had been left for future study in the 1978 Guidelines. These changes appeared to address the new security needs of both nations.

Dramatically, just three days after the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the September 11 attacks occurred with huge repercussions throughout the world. A post-post Cold War era began. From that day, the United States clearly shifted its security policy and currently sees the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) as its highest priority. Japan, though it still puts priority on regional security issues, made a significant step to send its troops outside the U.N. umbrella for the first time in order to contribute to the U.S.-led fight against terrorism as a reliable ally.

The Japan-U.S. alliance had successfully evolved to meet security requirements. However, big changes in the relationship once again loom in the near future. In Japan's Diet, the special committees are examining the revision of the Constitution, including Article IX, which restrains Japan's use of the military element of national power. They are also discussing how Japan should perform its international military contribution in the future, keeping in mind its goal to become a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. In addition, the ongoing Global Posture Review by the United States requires the review of the roles and missions played by both countries. These changes will inevitably lead to a redefinition of the alliance itself.

## **THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ALLIANCES**

International relations theories provide useful insights into answering questions about a new alliance. Although each theory of international relations provides its own perspectives on alliances, no theory provides a perfect definition and explanation of the function of the Japan-U.S. security alliance, especially after the Cold War. This does not necessarily mean that theories of international relations are not applicable to the Japan-U.S. security alliance. Rather, each theory can provide its own unique perspective on the alliance.

### **THE REALISTS' VIEWS ON ALLIANCES**

Realists see the international system as a state of anarchy. In such a world, in order to achieve their national interests, states have to pay close attention to the distribution of power and try to change/keep it favorable for them. Forming an alliance is a way to create a favorable balance the power.

According to realist theory, "alliances are formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership."<sup>8</sup> This definition expresses the realists' views on alliances very well. Realists think that the primary function of alliances is the prosecution of conflict with military power against a common enemy. Although they admit alliances contribute to the resolution of conflict among the member states, realists see this function as a by-product.

Although alliances are indispensable measures to balance power distributions in an anarchic international system, security dilemmas, such as concerns over relative gains,<sup>9</sup> as well as the anarchy of the international system itself, make alliance formation and management extremely difficult. While realists argue that a common enemy can relieve such difficulties and make alliances possible, the realists' argument implies that it is difficult, if not impossible, to sustain alliances without a common enemy.

### **THE IDEALISTS' VIEWS ON ALLIANCES**

Different from realists, idealists see the international system as one in which states can act in concert with each other to achieve their national interests. In such a world, although alliances still exist for security concerns, they are also a form of international institution through which states can work together for common goals. For idealists, alliances are "not just a bulwark against specific dangers, but the foundations for a strong international community in which like-minded, peaceful states consciously do what they can to reassure and protect each other."<sup>10</sup>

From the idealists' point of view, an alliance is expected to play a role performed by collective security measures or to support and complement such measures. It is essential for alliances to maintain the ability to resolve conflicts among their member states as well as the capability to influence states outside. As the basis of an international community, the multilateral approach is more attractive than the bilateral one. In addition, in order to maintain concerted efforts, alliances need to share more sustainable objectives, such as values and norms, than realists propose. Idealists strongly believe freedom and democracy are key values to successful alliances and alliances can be sustained over time by these shared values.

## **THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ALLIANCE AND THE THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### **THE ALLIANCE DURING THE COLD WAR**

The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty satisfies the characteristics of alliances defined by realists very well. Both Article V and VI provide for responses to hostile actions taken by a third country against Japan and in the Far East. Although the Treaty did not specify which country would be a common adversary, it was more than apparent during the Cold War that the Soviet Union was a de facto common threat for both countries. In addition, in 1951, when the original Treaty was signed, one of the U.S. objectives was to prevent Japan from becoming a militarized country again, which was one of the same reasons for which the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established to contain Germany. These facts strongly support the realists' perspective.

Meanwhile, the Treaty actually has institutional aspects consistent with the idealists' arguments, as well. The words "Mutual Cooperation" in the formal title shows that the Treaty emphasizes the significance of a better bilateral relationship and democratic values. The preamble of the Treaty points out that the two countries desire to "strengthen the bonds of peace and friendship traditionally existing," as well as, "uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law." Both the preamble and Article I and II refer to the "faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations" and the economic collaboration between them. These are common values and interests of the two countries. In this sense, the Treaty served for a framework for the two countries to pursue these values and interests together.

However, the realists' definition of alliances seems to provide a much stronger explanation of why the Japan-U.S. security alliance existed and evolved during the Cold War. For both countries how to defend their respective nations, while keeping the balance of power against the

Soviet Union, was the most urgent agenda. Japan could not stand against the Soviet Union alone. The United States highly valued Japan's geographical location for forward basing and later appreciated Japan's conventional military capability, which contributed to threatening the "Okhotsk Sanctuary," in which the Soviet Union kept its second nuclear strike capability.<sup>11</sup> In other words, the primary function expected of this alliance during the Cold War was the prosecution of conflict against a common enemy. This argument is also endorsed by the fact that changes in the Treaty during the Cold War, such as the revision of the Treaty in 1960 and announcement of the former "Guidelines" in 1978, were triggered by the rapid Soviet build-up in the Far East.

#### THE ALLIANCE AFTER THE COLD WAR

If the realists' definition of alliances is right, it is extremely difficult to explain how alliances could survive after the Cold War. Actually, alliances, such as the Japan-U.S. security alliance and NATO, seem not only to be surviving but also evolving. Realist theory has difficulty explaining this. On the other hand, given the current situation, idealists point out that the "alliances" as defined by realists are finished and traditional alliances are becoming international institutions that promote common values and interests. Thus, in the post-post Cold War era, both schools have value.

#### **Realist Views on the Alliance after the Cold War**

As the realists rightfully argue, the Japan-U.S. security alliance has drifted since the end of the Cold War and after losing a common threat. Although there are remnants of the Cold War in the Far East, both countries were initially rather optimistic about a new security environment because regional powers were believed to be proxies for the West and East. Specifically, many people believed North Korea could not survive without support from the Soviet Union. However, North Korea has not only survived, but also accelerated its brinkmanship.

In 1993, North Korea refused to comply with a special inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and announced its secession from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. These actions were followed by a ballistic missile test over the central Sea of Japan. The following year, in 1994, the tension reached its peak when North Korea announced its withdrawal from the IAEA. Although this series of crises was ended peacefully by the Framework Agreement signed by the United States and North Korea in 1994, North Korea continued to provoke the United States and its allies in the region, as well as the international community. In 1998, North Korea conducted another ballistic missile test, which sent a missile

over Japan and strongly demonstrated its rapid advances in this field. In 2002, the secret uranium enrichment program admitted by North Korea triggered another crisis on the Korean Peninsula. While the Six-Party Talks have been held to pursue a peaceful solution, no one can safely predict the future of the Korean Peninsula.<sup>12</sup>

The confrontation on the Korean Peninsula is different from other crises that came to the surface after the Cold War. While the United States intervened in several crises under the Clinton administration, such as Somalia and in former Yugoslavia, these interventions were triggered by humanitarian considerations. However, the combination of nuclear and ballistic missile capability by North Korea clearly poses military threats to the region. Japan is now within the effective range of existing North Korean ballistic missiles, Nodong and Taepo-Dong 1. Alaska and Guam, integral parts of the United States, are also within the effective range of Taepo-Dong 2, which is believed to be under development. Given the nature of nuclear ballistic missiles, which are destructive and difficult to counter, North Korea now becomes an urgent issue, and is a common threat to both Japan and the United States.

In this context, it is very easy to understand why the most significant evolution of Japan-U.S. bilateral security arrangements, the Joint Declaration and 1997 Guidelines, took place after the Cold War. Through the 1993-1994 crisis, the two governments shared a view that the North Korean issue was the most significant security challenge in the region and, in order to deal with the crisis, they recognized once again the utility of that function of alliances that is the prosecution of conflict with military power against a common enemy. The United States realized that the logistic support provided by Japan, as well as its geographical location are essential. Japan clearly understood that effective cooperation with the U.S. military is vital to prevent a crisis on the Korean Peninsula from expanding throughout the region.

While the Joint Declaration is a comprehensive document that discusses bilateral cooperation in the security field in the post Cold War era, the most important role of that document was to clarify the necessity to revise the 1978 Guidelines. The revised 1997 Guidelines actually focus on the cooperation in the Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan (SIASJ),<sup>13</sup> prescribing detailed roles and missions to be played by both countries. In 1999, Japan enacted the SIASJ law, under which Japan can perform the roles and missions defined in the 1997 Guidelines. In addition, scenarios for the defense of Japan used in bilateral military exercises become more low intensity oriented than before, and this implies that the potential target of the bilateral alliance is a regional crisis that may have a great influence on Japan's peace and stability.

How can the Japan-U.S. security alliance survive and evolve after the Cold War? Realist theory provides an answer. An aggressive North Korea is a common threat to both countries. However, no one knows how long North Korea will survive in the future. If North Korea collapses and there is no common threat, the realist' perspective suggests that the alliance will drift again.

Some realists believe that the Japan-U.S. security alliance will be maintained and further strengthened by the uniqueness of this alignment. They point out that the sensitiveness of Japan's defense build-up in the region as well as Japan's fears of abandonment by its partner can be positive factors for alliance management.<sup>14</sup> There is another argument that says, since Washington decides the policy on how to employ the alliance, the United States will try to keep the alliance.<sup>15</sup> However, Japan will not be concerned about the sensitivity to Japan's defense build-up in the region when a threat against Japan becomes imminent. In addition, the fears of abandonment and unilateral decision making by the United States do not contribute to a long term healthy bilateral relationship.

Another realist provides a much worse scenario. Kenneth Waltz argues that, as a global power, it is natural that Japan has no choice but to rearm. Especially given the expanding military capability of China combined with the drawdown of the U.S. Asian presence after the Cold War, Japan needs to balance against a rising China by acquiring greater military capability, including nuclear weapons.<sup>16</sup>

In a word, from these perspectives, realists warn that the Japan-U.S. security alliance will not survive or will be significantly damaged unless a new common threat is defined after the North Korean issue is resolved.

#### **Idealist Views on the Alliance after the Cold War**

Idealists agree that the Japan-U.S. security alliance has drifted. However, it was not because both countries lost a common threat, but because the two governments could not recognize the significance of their alliance as an international institution based on common values and interests, namely freedom and democracy. Although idealists admit that North Korea poses military threats against both countries, the essential function of this alliance after the Cold War is the foundation for further expanding a free and democratic international community.

Idealists consider the Joint Declaration and 1997 Guidelines as a tremendous step for the future bilateral relationship. From the idealists' view, the Joint Declaration is a revolutionary document because it clarified for the first time two potential areas for bilateral cooperation,

namely regional cooperation and global cooperation, in addition to the traditional bilateral cooperation under the Japan-U.S. security treaty. Under the 1997 Guidelines, both countries agreed to deepen their cooperation in such areas as confidence building measures, U.N. peacekeeping operations, and international disaster relief operations; and recognized these as functions of the alliance in peacetime. These facts strongly suggest that the bilateral security alliance now strengthens its character as an international institution, not necessarily designed only to respond against specific threats.

In addition, while it is not directly related to the Japan-U.S. security alliance, the Japanese government changed its traditional security policy, which previously just focused on territorial defense. Japan now undertook initiatives to contribute to stabilizing the new international security environment. In 1992, the Japanese Diet authorized the U.N. Peacekeeping Operations Law.<sup>17</sup> Since then, Japan has participated in more than ten U.N. peacekeeping operations as well as international disaster relief operations.<sup>18</sup> After September 11, instead of exercising the right of collective self defense, which is prohibited under the current official interpretation of the Constitution, Japan enacted the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law<sup>19</sup> and has been sending naval and air contingents to support Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Responding to the suspicion of Iraq's possible acquisition of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in 2002 Japan was one of the countries that supported the U.S. hard line policy from the earliest stage. After the major combat had ended, the Japanese government established the Iraq Humanitarian and Reconstruction Special Measures Law and has been sending ground and air contingents in and around Iraq to contribute to Operation Iraq Freedom (OIF). These two operations are Japan's first attempts to deploy its forces outside the U.N. umbrella other than for natural disaster relief operations.

Idealists view these significant changes of Japan's approach toward international security issues as the fruit of the Japan-U.S. security alliance. They see this bilateral alliance as an international framework that encourages the Japanese to commit to the new arena. They recognized this as an essential function of the alliance, since both the Joint Declaration and 1997 Guidelines touched upon such cooperation without being specific. The JSDF actually received advice and lessons learned from the U.S. forces in achieving these missions.<sup>20</sup> The U.S. forces deployed in Japan enable the United States to conduct timely and effective operations.<sup>21</sup> The bilateral security alliance contributes to helping and improving countries suffering from difficulties, based on the principles of freedom and democracy.

Unfortunately, the evolution of the Japan-U.S. security alliance as an international institution has been too slow and incremental compared to that of NATO. Immediately after the



Cold War, NATO adopted the London Declaration in 1990, urging that NATO should extend its hand to the eastern European countries, the former adversaries. NATO established the Partnership for Peace program and finally welcomed three eastern European countries as regular member states in 1999. It could be said that NATO became a collective security institution. Furthermore, NATO's participation in OEF shows that NATO now commits to international security as an entity. However, the Japan-U.S. security alliance seems likely neither to be multilateral nor to take an increased responsibility in the international community as an entity in the near future. Unlike NATO, the alliance does not have a standing framework for strategic discussions, either.

As the idealists' expectations for the Japan-U.S. security alliance have become larger, the Japanese government has been required to make greater efforts to share a fair burden with the United States. After the Cold War, Japan expanded its host nation support to the U.S. forces in Japan and by 1995, Japan shared about 70 percent of the cost for the stationing, compared to about 35-40 percent a decade ago.<sup>22</sup> But, given Japan's long stagnated economy and the people's perception of an unfair burden, the Japanese government has not sustained host nation support at the JFY1995 level and the total amount of money has actually been decreasing.<sup>23</sup> In addition, U.S. requests for Japan to contribute its forces to international missions are still not popular among the Japanese people. In order to gain public support for sending the JSDF to Iraq, Prime Minister Koizumi and other key politicians reiterated that "the Japan-U.S. alliance has a tremendous power to deter countries to take aggressive actions against Japan and we should not forget it," which implies the most significant function of this alliance is the prosecution of conflict against third countries.<sup>24</sup> The idealists' perspectives provide further potential power of the Japan-U.S. security alliance after the Cold War. However, they also imply there are a lot of points to be worked out in order to improve the alliance to bear a wider range of missions.

### **CHALLENGES IN THE POST-POST COLD WAR ERA**

Realists and idealists provide totally different interpretations to and challenges for the Japan-U.S. security alliance after the Cold War. However, this bilateral alliance does not have to choose one path among the theories of international relations. Given the current security circumstances, the Japan-U.S. security alliance needs to focus on the function that idealists prefer, while still hedging against unforeseeable future events by maintaining and strengthening the defensive nature that realists think of as the essence of alliances. In other words, in order to

make the bilateral alliance as flexible as possible for the future security circumstances, both realists' and idealists' advice are useful.

#### REALISTS' ADVICE

Realists maintain that it is essential for alliances to have a common threat. Although there is a common threat for the Japan-U.S. security alliance right now, which is North Korea, no one can tell if the alliance will find a common threat after North Korea. However, this does not necessarily mean the two governments need to find a future common enemy for now. Rather, it requires both governments to closely exchange their threat perceptions on a continuous basis.

Other than the shared recognition against the North Korean threat, the perception gap between Japan and the United States seems widening. After September 11, the security interests of the United States, or at least its priorities, have been dramatically changed. Facing the unprecedented attack on its mainland by terrorism, "combating terrorism and securing the U.S. homeland from future attacks are top priority"<sup>25</sup> for the current U.S. security agenda. Meanwhile, Japan's primary security interests have not been shifted towards the GWOT even after September 11, even though the terrorist attack killed more than forty Japanese at the World Trade Center and had a huge negative impact on Japan's economy. Japan's primary interests still remain within the Asia-Pacific region.

Within the region, only a rising China has the potential to be a hegemon against which Japan and the United States need to maintain a balance of power. However, the two countries' perspectives on China are different. The United States seeks a rather closer relationship with China, which was a strategic competitor when President Bush took the office, since China supports the U.S. efforts to eradicate terrorism. China actually closely cooperates with the United States in some areas such as information sharing. On the other hand, there is a growing concern about China in Japan. Historically, Japan, as other countries in the region, has been sensitive to Sino-centrism. The Chinese current defense build-up, putting emphasis on a joint amphibious capability, increases China's operational capabilities outside the country. In addition to the groundless claim against the Senkaku islands,<sup>26</sup> their recent maritime research activities in and around the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone illustrate Chinese ambition to acquire the natural resources under the seabed.<sup>27</sup>

Japan possesses a realistic vision that focused on threats and interests in the short term.<sup>28</sup> This means Japanese perceptions on China may be easily changed by Chinese actions. For now, China is just a concern for Japan and not a threat to both countries. But continuous dialogue between the two governments is essential, since perceptions of a country

could be changed by even a trifling event. When a member state recognizes a threat and the other does not, the alliance certainly loses its credibility. This is the worst scenario for any alliance. However, this does not necessarily mean that both countries have to perfectly share the same perceptions. Instead, it demonstrates the importance of both governments fully understanding the partner's perceptions. In other words, continuous strategic dialogue is essential to an effective alliance.

#### IDEALISTS' ADVICE

Idealists teach that the alliance could survive without a common enemy if it functions as an international institution based on common values and norms. Given the collapse of a formidable common threat and prevailing democracy, it is natural that the function of serving as a foundation for a strong international community becomes much more important for daily alliance management. However, there is a serious question of whether the two countries really share common values and norms down to the last details. Though there is no doubt both countries recognize the significance of promoting democracy, the two countries have different perspectives on how to achieve it. While U.S. policy insists that democracy and human rights should proceed hand in hand with economic development, Japanese policy assumes that democracy follows economic success. In terms of method, the United States operates with legal briefs, economic sanctions and the "stick," while Japan prefers constructive engagement through dialogue, economic assistance, and "carrots."<sup>29</sup> The two governments have not seriously coordinated such policies as an essential element of the bilateral security alliance, though the economic element is covered by the Treaty.

Furthermore, the two governments have significantly different perspectives on the U.N., the largest and overarching international organization. The United States recognizes the U.N. as one of the international institutions which, if preferable, it can employ to achieve its objectives. The United States sees the U.N. as a useful but not authoritative international organization. In contrast, while many people in Japan clearly understand the significance of the Japan-U.S. bilateral relationship, it is widely accepted that the U.N. is the supreme international organization. In fact, the U.N. Security Council Resolutions were indispensable elements for the Japanese government to send troops to contribute to both OEF and OIF.<sup>30</sup> Because of these different perspectives, it is doubtful if the Japan-U.S. security alliance is firm enough to be a foundation for further bilateral cooperation in the international community, while ignoring the U.N.

These differences are potentially significant barriers to further strengthening of bilateral cooperation. While different approaches on how to employ its national elements of power may cause some confusion and detract from coordinated efforts, different approaches, if appropriately harmonized under a comprehensive strategic picture, in the post-post Cold War era could complement each other and yield a much bigger gain.<sup>31</sup> Successful international institutions need to employ a much wider spectrum of power than traditional alliances. In this case, both governments need to articulate a common comprehensive strategy involving all elements of power. In such an alliance, if Japan were selected as an additional permanent member state in the Security Council, Japan could be much more effective in mitigating the differences between the United States and the U.N. Again, the continuous bilateral strategic dialogue is the key.

As an international institution, the Japan-U.S. alliance can and should examine ways to deepen the cooperation with other countries such as the Republic of Korea, another ally of the United States, as well as Taiwan, a democratic entity. Meanwhile, since China, though another potential candidate to closely cooperate, occasionally expresses its concerns on the alliance, the alliance, as an entity, needs to initiate dialogues to assure China, in addition to the efforts taken by respective countries.

## **CONCLUSION**

Numerous scholars and strategists have proposed measures to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. security alliance after the Cold War. Many proposals were actually adopted and contributed to maintaining the alliance in the post Cold War environment. As a result, the Japan-U.S. security alliance seems to be moving in the right direction for now. However, most of the previous progress was largely focused on short-term operational issues, and failed to address long-term threats and common values and norms. The post-post cold war era requires a more comprehensive and better orchestrated alliance.

Observers of the alliance have identified the significance of strategic level issues, such as the strategic dialogue and communication capability between the two countries. The 1997 Guidelines emphasize the significance of close consultation on defense policies and military stance in as wide a range of levels and fields as possible at every opportunity.<sup>32</sup> However, the policy consultations after the 1997 Guidelines have still been primarily focused on operational issues, such as burden sharing, basing and the Japanese military contribution. In other words, the "well-intentioned efforts to find substitutes for concrete collaboration and clear goal-setting have produced a diffuse dialogue but no clear definition of a common purpose." In addition,

“lack of focus and follow-through has been evident in both countries.” Even worse, comprehensive efforts, such as the 1996 Joint Declaration, stood alone.<sup>33</sup>

Although the common strategic objectives announced at the SCC in February 2005 is a great step, the list of these objectives is within the scope provided by the Joint Declaration and should have been identified much earlier. It is also said that the real motivation for the list is to make the realignment of the U.S. Forces in Japan smooth, implying it is triggered by an operational concern.<sup>34</sup> In order not to repeat the past mistakes, actions taken by the two governments from now on are critical. Since the list of the common strategic objectives is a menu without any priority, the two governments need to establish a real strategy: that is how to balance the requirements as an alliance and an international institution with limited resources, and identify the roles and missions of both governments under current security environments.

Different from NATO, the Japan-U.S. security alliance does not possess a standing organization which supports the alliance in dealing with both operational and strategic issues.<sup>35</sup> Given the much wider range of expectations for this alliance in the post-post Cold War, the existing framework, a series of periodical dialogues between diplomatic and military authorities, does not provide adequate mechanisms to deepen the discussions on long-term as well as essential issues.<sup>36</sup> In addition, it can not serve as a permanent contact point with other countries in order to promote cooperation as well as to wipe out their concerns. A new independent standing framework for strategic discussions is essential to the alliance. The new mechanism should also be able to discuss economic and other aspects, in order to make the alliance more comprehensive and better orchestrated.

There may be criticisms that such attempt is just increasing the bureaucratic layers, making decision making more complex. However, it should be recognized that the security environments are so diverse and unpredictable, and change extremely fast in the post-post Cold War era. In such circumstances, the alliance should be able to act in a timely, well coordinated and comprehensive manner. In addition, it is almost certain that there will emerge in the near future other essential issues for the alliance such as the revision of Japan's Constitution and increased JSDF commitments to international missions. In order not to have the series of past efforts stand alone this time, and in order to improve the alliance on a continuous basis, both governments should seriously examine the way to maintain and strengthen strategic dialogue within the alliance as well as with third countries.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Article II makes clear that the two governments will “contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles ...and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being,” “seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies,” and “encourage economic collaboration between them.”

<sup>2</sup> Article V discusses only “an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan” and, in such a case, each party “declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes.”

<sup>3</sup> Article VI clarifies that “For the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East, the United States of America is granted the use by its land, air and naval forces of facilities and areas in Japan.” The geographical area of the Far East in this article is “the areas north the Philippines, Japan and surrounding Japan, which includes the Republic of Korea and Taiwan.” (Official interpretation of the Japanese Government issued in February 1960.)

<sup>4</sup> Although Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan “forever renounce(s) war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes,” the Japanese government understands that the article does not prohibit Japan from exercising the right of individual self defense and possessing a minimum necessary level capability to defend Japan. However, the government interprets that exercising the right of collective self defense as well as possessing a capability to meet such requirements exceed the constitutional limitation. (Official interpretation of the Japanese Government issued in November 1961.)

<sup>5</sup> U.S. forces can use Facilities and Areas in Japan for an event in the Far East which risks the peace and stability in the region, which, in theory, does not necessarily affect Japan's peace and stability.

<sup>6</sup> Another reason that the roles and missions under Article VI were left for the future study was that, in Japan, because of spreading pacifism, it was very politically sensitive to discuss military cooperation with the United States. While the majority of the people could understand the significance of military cooperation in case of an armed attack against Japan, many people were concerned that Japan would be involved in a U.S.-initiated War in the Far East. For further discussion, see Kazuya Sakamoto, “Nichi-Bei Anpo ni okeru Sougosei no Katachi (Reciprocity in the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements),” *Gaiko Forum*, vol.10, (December 1997).

<sup>7</sup> The 1997 Guidelines clarified three baskets for cooperation. The first basket is for bilateral cooperation under the Japan-U.S. security relationship, the second basket for regional cooperation (“region” here implies the Asia-Pacific region, not the Far East mentioned in the Treaty), and the third basket for global cooperation.

<sup>8</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>10</sup> Mike Mochizuki and Michael O'Hanlon, “A Liberal Vision for the US-Japanese Alliance,” *Survival* 40 (Summer 1998): 130.

<sup>11</sup> The Soviet Union deployed its strategic nuclear submarines in the Barents Sea as well as the Sea of Okhotsk, which ensure the Soviet's second nuclear strike capability against the United States. Different from the Barents Sea, which allows the U.S. attack submarines to approach from the Arctic Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk can deny the U.S. access by controlling three international straits, namely the Soya, Nemuro and, Tsugaru straits, so that the Sea of Okhotsk would provide a much safer space for Soviet strategic nuclear submarines.

<sup>12</sup> In order to peacefully solve the North Korean nuclear programs revealed in 2002, six countries, North Korea, the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, People's Republic of China, and Russian Federation, agreed to establish a series of talks, called the Six Party Talks. While they met three times, August 2003, February and May 2004, the next talk is not scheduled yet since North Korea expressed its withdrawal from the Talks in February 2005.

<sup>13</sup> SIASJ is the abbreviation for "Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan that Will Have Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security". The SIASJ is not a geographical concept but a situational one.

<sup>14</sup> Yasuhiro Ogura, "Doumei ni kanshiteno Rironteki Kosatsu (A Theoretical Analysis on Alliances)," *Shin Bouei-ron Shyu* 28 (June 2000): 67-81.

<sup>15</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War," *International Security* 25 (Summer 2000): 18-27.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 32-39.

<sup>17</sup> Under the U.N. Peacekeeping Operations Law, Japan can participate in traditional U.N. peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian assistance operations upon the requests of either the international organizations or the countries involved. On the other hand, the JSDF activities are limited to logistics support type operations because the official interpretation of the Constitution prohibits Japan from exercising force even for peacekeeping type operations, except for self-defense and acts of necessity. The JSDF can also be employed to help disaster areas with the International Disaster Relief Dispatch Law, which was amended in 1992.

<sup>18</sup> As of March 2005, Japan has participated in four U.N. peacekeeping operations and nine international humanitarian and disaster relief operations.

<sup>19</sup> The Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law applies only to terrorists' activities relating to the September 11 attacks in the United States, and, in order to take actions against other terrorists' activities, the Japanese government needs additional legislation.

<sup>20</sup> As a good example, the JSDF contingents sent to Iraq, received information in Iraq as well as operational and tactical advice, from the U.S. Forces prior to their deployment.

<sup>21</sup> A good example is the humanitarian assistance operations for tsunami-hit countries in 2005. A Joint Task Force was organized headed by the Commander, III MEF, Okinawa, and performed timely rescue and relief operations.

<sup>22</sup> Ogura, 72-74.

<sup>23</sup> In JFY 2004, the Japanese government shared about 244 billion Yen, which has dropped by 0.8 % from the previous fiscal year.

<sup>24</sup> Even before the discussion on Japan's possible support after the Iraq War in the Diet, in his support speech for the U.S.-led war against Iraq on 20 March 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi intentionally referred to and actually stressed the deterrence provided by the United States. (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 20 March 2005.)

<sup>25</sup> George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.:The White House, 2003), 1.

<sup>26</sup> The Senkaku Islands were returned to Japan by the U.S. in 1972 as part of the Reversion of Okinawa. Even after its return to Japan, U.S. Forces had used one of the islands as a target range until 1978. Meanwhile China suddenly began to claim the islands as their territory after a survey revealed that there are an abundance of natural resources under its seabed. In 1992, China unilaterally issued the Territorial Water Law, which stipulates that the Senkaku Islands are their territory.

<sup>27</sup> *Defense of Japan in JFY 2002* (Tokyo, Japan: Japan Defense Agency, 2003), 67-68.

<sup>28</sup> Yuichi Hosoya, "Amerika, Doumei, Sekai-chitsujyo (The United States, Alliance and International Order)," *Shin Bouei-ron Shyu* 29 (September 2001), 19-20.

<sup>29</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan, Asian-Pacific Security, and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism," *International Security* 26 (Winter 2001/02), 170.

<sup>30</sup> Both the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law and Iraq Humanitarian and Reconstruction Special Measures Law mention the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions and authorize the government to take actions in line with them.

<sup>31</sup> The policy toward Myanmar can be an example. While the final objective is shared by both governments, which is a democratized and economically wealthier Myanmar, the different approaches taken by the two governments without detailed coordination actually decrease effects brought by the other approach.

<sup>32</sup> *Defense of Japan in JFY 2002*, 141.

<sup>33</sup> National Defense University, *The United States and Japan: Advancing toward a Mature Partnership*, INSS Special Report; (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 2000).

<sup>34</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, 11 February 2005

<sup>35</sup> During the Cold War, when the two governments agreed to put priority on the Japanese territorial defense, it could be said that the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo and the U.S. Forces, Japan have been daily contact points for Japanese counterparts and played similar functions with a standing mechanism; given the nature of the issue, both governments needed to consult each other. However, as the scope of the alliance becomes wider, neither the U.S. Embassy nor the U.S. Forces, Japan seems to have a capability or authority to work out a strategy covering regional and global issues.



<sup>36</sup> The 1997 Guidelines, while emphasizing the significance of policy consultations under normal circumstances, only refer to close consultations on defense policies and military posture, and do not touch upon consultations on other elements of national power. The 1997 Guidelines also point out that the objectives of policy consultation as well as information sharing should be achieved by all available opportunities represented by the SCC and Security Sub-Committee meetings, which only consist of diplomatic and military authorities.

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